

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed October 18, 2005, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration.

The Office Action noted that Figures 1A, 1B, and 2 should be designated by a legend such as -- Prior Art --. This has been done. Review and approval of the proposed drawing correction is respectfully requested.

Applicants have amended claims 1 and 5 to delete the word "predetermined". This amendment is for clarification only and in no way narrows the scope of claims 1 and 5.

Claims 1, 2, and 4-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bloomer. Applicants respectfully disagree with this rejection.

Bloomer is directed to a circuit for self-commutating turn-off of insulated gate transistors (10-1 and 10-2 in, for example, Figure 2A) that are serially-connected. The circuit includes two comparators (14-1 and 14-2), the reference inputs of which receive the same threshold voltage (+v). Therefore, Bloomer provides only one threshold voltage.

By contrast, claim 1 recites a circuit for detecting an overcurrent in an element through which an A.C. supply current flows, comprising detecting a variation in the voltage between the terminals of the element beyond two thresholds. At least this limitation is not taught or suggested by Bloomer.

In addition, claim 1 recites that the read inputs of the comparators are interconnected. Clearly, Bloomer does not teach or suggest at least this limitation.

Accordingly, claim 1 distinguishes over Bloomer and is in allowable condition. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 2-11 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

Applicants have also added claims 12-20 to further define Applicants' contribution to the art. Claims 12 recites a circuit for detecting an overcurrent in an element through which an A.C. supply current flows, comprising: a first comparator, responsive to a first polarity of the A.C. supply, receiving on a reference input a first reference voltage that sets a first threshold; a second comparator, responsive to a second polarity of the A.C. supply, receiving on a reference input a second reference voltage that sets a second threshold; and input stage providing, to respective

interconnected read inputs of the comparators, a voltage across the element, the input stage comprising at least one first resistive element introducing a voltage drop between a first one of the terminals of the element and the read inputs.

As discussed above in connection with claim 1, Bloomer does not teach or suggest the limitations of claim 12.

Claims 13-20 depend from claim 12 and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

Serial No.: 10/679,996
Conf. No.: 4553

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Art Unit: 2858

CONCLUSION

A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at the telephone number listed below if this communication does not place the case in condition for allowance.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicant hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 23/2825.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 

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Docket No.: S1022.81051US00
Date: February 17, 2005
x02/18/05x

IN THE DRAWINGS

“Replacement Sheet” is attached which includes a clean version of amended Figures 1A, 1B, and 2. The attached sheet replaces the original sheet including Figures 1A, 1B, and 2.

“Annotated Sheets Showing Change” is also attached which includes a marked-up version of Figures 1A, 1B, and 2.

The Office Action noted that Figures 1A, 1B, and 2 should be designated by a legend such as -- Prior Art --. This has been done. Review and approval of the proposed drawing correction is respectfully requested.



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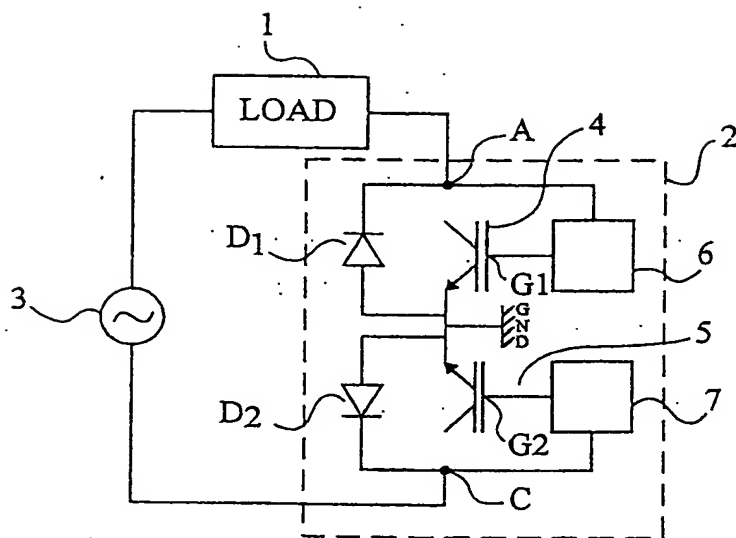


Fig 1A
Prior Art

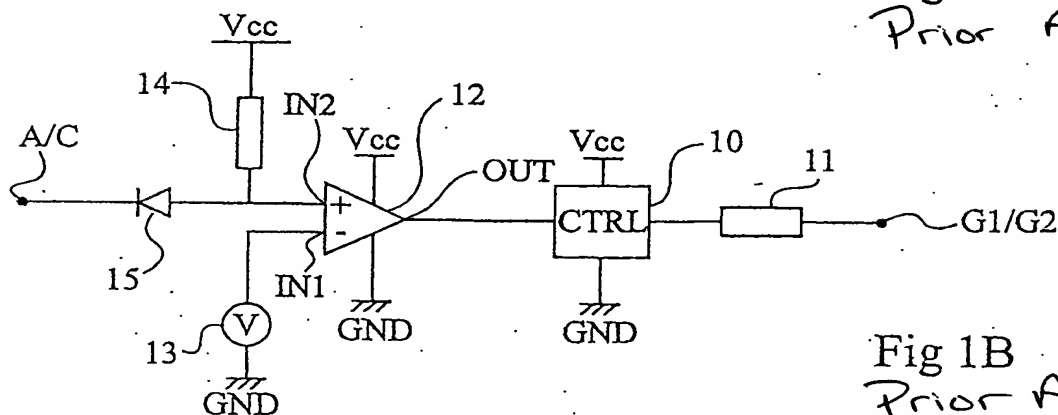


Fig 1B
Prior Art

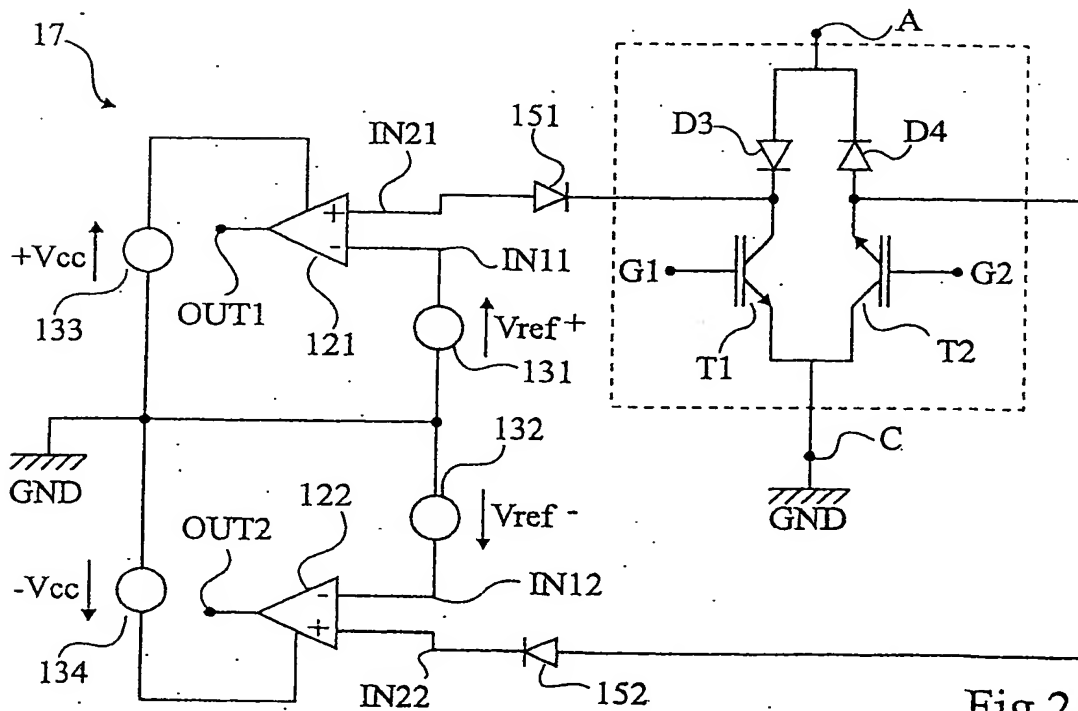


Fig 2
Prior Art